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THE

UNITARIAN

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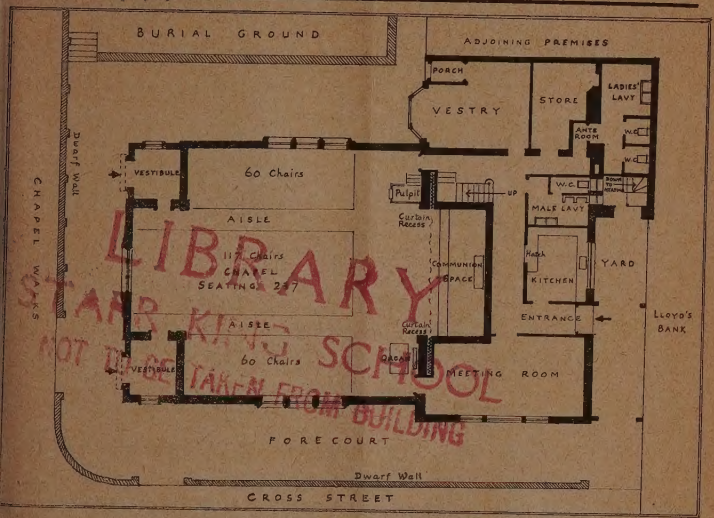

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NOT TO BE TAKEN FROM BUILDING

Plan of the new Chapel

CROSS STREET REBUILDS

By Dr. R. W. Wilde

In December, 1940, Hitler's incendiary bombs rained down upon the City of Manchester. Among the "casualties" was the historic Cross Street Chapel, which was completely gutted. In the devastation there perished its magnifient organ, its famed "three-decker" pulpit, much of its library, and some of its historic records. Later, in the interests of public safety, even the pitiable shell of its former walls had to be reduced in height, and a notable landmark in the City largely disappeared.

The Cross Street community can boast a continuous and unbroken record since the year 1687, although for some years its services took place in barns and private houses, the "New Chapel"—as for long it was called—not being erected until 1694. The first service of public worship in the new edifice was held on June 24th of that year. The building was a massive rectangular (almost square) one, with a gallery running round three sides of it. Behind, and happily not damaged in the aerial bombardment, is the Chapel House, with its historic (upstairs) "Chapel Room," in which, over the centuries, some of Manchester's most famous institutions were first mooted and engendered,

and where some of its most illustrious sons were nurtured and trained.

For several years following the "blitz" the services were held in this Chapel Room, until, in 1945, the present small and temporary asbestos structure was erected. Now, at long last, a new structure, to replace the earlier Chapel, is envisaged and the plans for it have already secured the approval of the Town Planning Authority. It is expected that building operations will begin with the Spring, and that completion will be effected some nine to twelve months later.

The new Chapel will be on more modest lines than its famous predecessor. It will seat (instead of the former 1,000 or more) only some 250 persons, but, like the earlier building, it will be marked by simplicity and economy of design. Architecturally it will present a pleasing combination of the old and the new, with its flat roof, stepped to two levels, its cool clear straightness of line, its rectangular (almost square) interior, and its absence of all unnecessary ornament. It will (by agreement with the Civic Authorities) be set back some fifteen feet from the present front level, and this fifteen feet will be laid out as lawn and garden, with, as now, seats inviting the passer-by to pause and rest awhile. The ceiling of the Chapel proper will itself be stepped to two levels, being lower at the sides, thus affording an increased sense of distance and depth. A Chancel will be erected at the northern (ecclesiastically "eastern") end; two rectangular porches will give access to the building, each with sufficient room for coat pegs and umbrella stands.

Behind (and in part above) the Chapel itself will be a commodious vestry, and—what was absent from the original building—adequate toilet and lavatory accommodation, a store room, a modern kitchen, and a meeting room capable of seating some forty or fifty persons. The existing Chapel Room will become part of the new edifice, but will be approached not, as now, from the street, but by means of a central "hall" or vestibule lying between the Chapel proper and the various rooms and offices behind.

A large proportion of the cost of the new building will be met by the War Damage Commission; insurance will provide a little more; the congregation will be called upon to raise further monies to make up the total expenditure. But the Cross Street community looks to the future with anticipation, confidence, and hope, happy that at long last its dream of a new Chapel is to be realised; that this "cathedral of Non-conformity" is to rise again, phoenix-like, from its ashes; and that its witness to a free and enlightened religious faith will be continued and carried on in more adequate and attractive premises than in recent years.

NEW ORGAN DEDICATED

On January 22nd a new "Lincoln" electronic organ was presented to the Old Meeting House at Newcastle, Staffordshire, by Frank, Alan, Henry and Dora Cooper in memory of their parents who were married in the chapel in 1895 and who played an outstanding part in chapel affairs for more than forty years. The organ was dedicated by the Rev. Maurice Johnson, a former minister who was warmly welcomed by the Lay Pastor, Mr. D. S. Malbon. Mr. Frank Cooper made the presentation on behalf of the family. He himself succeeded his father as secretary. The crowded congregation included visitors from Congleton and Crewe. The chapel was beautifully decorated with plants and flowers given by Miss Marion Jones and her sister Mrs. Edith Shufflebotham.

UNITARIAN STALWARTS

No. 34. Harold E. Fishburn of Attercliffe

In the year 1901 a few young men in Attercliffe, Sheffield, got together to see if they might start a Unitarian movement in Attercliffe. It was a long way in those days for Attercliffe people to go to worship in Upper Chapel. Helped by the Rev. J. E. Manning, of Upper Chapel, these earnest young men held a service in one of their houses, and then hired a room in the Vestry Hall in Attercliffe at a rent of 1s. a week.

Mr. Manning and the Rev. John Ellis, of Upperthorpe, conducted services whenever possible. One of these pioneers was a young baker and confectioner, Harold Fishwick, whose grandparents had attended Upper Chapel under the Rev. Eli Fay. In 1902 a Sunday School was formed, and Harold Fishwick became its first treasurer. With the Rev. C. J. Street he worked for the opening of the present building in 1906. It was opened free of debt, and he has ever since proudly boasted that "Shirland Lane" has remained free of debt.

He was Church Secretary from 1907 to 1914, and then became chairman, an office he has held ever since. As superintendent of the Sunday School from 1907 to 1940 (when the school was blitzed) he received the S.S.A. long service medal. He served the District S.S.A. as treasurer for fifteen years, and has been president of the Sheffield District Association of Churches.

His profession as a baker still allowed his time to serve Shirland Lane in capacities as varied as poster-writer and sale-of-work organiser. He never misses a service if he can possibly get there, and his garden and tennis court have been at the disposal of church members. He has a keen sense of humour, a quick and active brain and a kindly tolerant disposition. He can "lose himself" playing the piano or repairing an electric light switch —and he is a true Unitarian.

A CHURCH INVITATION

From the Sydney Unitarian Church Calendar:

If you are weary and want rest; if you are lonely and want fellowship; if you are troubled and want peace; if you are puzzled and want to understand; if you are wrong and want to get right; if you are strong and want to help others; if you are reverent and want to worship; if you are happy and want to thank Someone: then this Church opens wide its doors to YOU.

UNITARIAN PRINCIPLES

We believe that God is Love; that His Love is revealed supremely in Jesus and in many saintly and heroic lives; that His Spirit guides those who seek Him into the way of truth and righteousness; that the Church is the fellowship of those who desire God's inspiration for their daily lives; and that the true bond of unity between the members of a church is never a form of words, or imposed creed, but a unity of spirit that seeks the truth in love.

THE BOY AND THE PUPPY

By Joyce Hazlehurst

While waiting for a bus one day, I watched a small boy take a puppy for a walk. They were a comical pair. The puppy, square in shape, did not want to walk at all. Frequently he squatted down, and it took several tugs of the lead to get him moving again. Just as progress was being made, however, the boy would stop to pull his socks up. When the boy stopped, the dog stopped, and the whole cycle of events had to start afresh. At last the boy was passing my bus-stop, when the puppy firmly squatted down beside me. The boy addressed him sternly. "What are you waiting there for?" he said. "You're not going on the bus." Then he added to me confidingly, "Once this dog gets sat down, it's an awful job to get him up again!"

Ah, I thought, how like a church! When once a church "gets sat down," it's an awful job to get it up again! That is true of all institutions which depend for their life on the energy, vision and faith of human beings. Unless we watch out, these virtues are replaced by fatigue, monotony and depression, we "get sat down" when we should be on the march.

To Jesus, God was the source of new life and new hope. To turn to Him in prayer and trust was to renew the springs of living and religion. Jesus must have been often physically tired but he never "grew stale"; he was too close to God for that. Since Jesus, thousands of his humble followers have found that communion with God, in the way most meaningful to them, is the secret of new energy.

"So simple is the heart of man,
So ready for new hope and joy;
Ten thousand years since it began
Have left it younger than a boy."

I'm not altogether happy about that resolution on "Civil and Religious Liberty."

RECOMMENDED

Unitarian Religious Plays

In **Dusk and Dawn** (Order of the Great Companions 5s., but 1s. per copy to dramatic groups ordering not less than seven) Basil Viney has provided a trilogy of three short historical plays. They seek to be faithful to the opinions and characters of the famous men depicted and the language is present-day and sometimes unexpectedly colloquial. The plays form a series, but can be presented separately, and were first used in dramatic services of worship.

The first play "Darkness Gathers," shows the development of early Christian orthodoxy and the doubts of Sabellius and Paul of Samosata. The second, "Midnight at Nicaea" dramatises the famous debate between Athanasius and Arius, with Eusebius as the champion of toleration against the narrowness of both. The third, "Broken Dawn," comes down to the year 1553, after the martyrdom of Servetus, and deals with the teaching of Sebastian Franck as an early apostle of Unitarian tolerance and the ideal of universal religion. The plays can be recommended for reading as well as acting, and provide material for putting Unitarian teaching across to youth groups or discussion circles.

G.A. MEETINGS 1957

Plans for Birmingham

Twenty-five years after its previous visit the General Assembly is again to meet in Birmingham. Most of the sessions will be held in the Friends' Meeting House, Bull Street, in the centre of the town and close to Snow Hill station.

The proceedings will begin with the Sunday School Association annual meeting at 2 p.m. on April 23rd, Easter Tuesday. At 4.30 there will be the informal reception. The Anniversary Service at the Church of the Messiah will be conducted by the Rev. John Storer, of Hale, with the Editor of *The Unitarian*, the Rev. A. W. Vallance, as preacher.

At the annual business meeting on the Wednesday morning, the Rev. J. Percival Chalk, of Croydon, will be installed president by the retiring president, Mr. C. H. Pollard. The Rt. Hon. J. Chuter Ede, P.C., M.P., will be nominated president-elect which means that he will preside at the 1958 assembly.

At the 7 o'clock public meeting the theme "What I expect of the Church" will be taken up by a minister, a layman and a member of the Y.P.L. and F.O.Y. The concluding session on Friday morning will take the form of a conference on "Putting our Faith to the Outside World." The Rev. Keith Treacher and Dr. Jeremy Goring, who serve on the G.A. Publicity Sub-Committee will be the speakers with the Rev. E. D. Davies in the chair.

On Thursday morning the Communion Service at the Church of the Messiah will be conducted by the Rev. Gabriel Kereki, of Tenterden. Then at 11 a.m. Professor Basil Willey, of Cambridge, will give the Essex Hall Lecture on "The Religion of Nature." Thursday afternoon will see the business of the various auxiliary organisations dealt with. The Lay Preachers and Men's League, Women's League, and Ministerial Fellowship. The Social Service Department and the Historical Society will hold their respective meetings.

The Midland Union committee are arranging the catering for delegates in a restaurant near the Meeting House. A handbook giving information of the twenty churches which form the Midland Union is being published.

A.P.

CHILDREN'S CORNER

The Mayor's Problem (2)

"Sammy!" cried the Mayor, "you've come! Just the man I've been looking for!"

The valet, who, of course, had *really* been doing the looking, said wearily: "But your Worship, you *asked* me to bring him—and quickly." "Of course I did!" roared the Mayor, "of course I did! This is important! Now, Sammy: come here, my lad, and have a look at this!"

Sammy went round to the other side of the desk and saw that "this" was, of all things, a toy cannon! The valet's eyes were popping.

"Now, Sammy," the Mayor went on, paying no attention at all to his valet, "See: when I pull the cord, the cannon won't fire. Now, why won't it? Why won't it, eh?"

Sammy looked at the cannon for a second or two and silently pointed to the cord.

The Mayor spluttered.

"D'you mean to say you've found out already? I've been looking for most of the afternoon. What is it, lad, what is it?"

"That knot, your Worship," said Sammy, respectfully.

"Knot? What's wrong with the knot?"

"It's in the wrong place," Sammy explained patiently. "It's in the way

so that you can't fire the cannon. It should come down here a bit."

"Sammy, you're a genius!" yelled the Mayor enthusiastically, "I really must have you promoted sometime, if I can just remember."

The valet had recovered a little of his poise.

"But, sir, your urgent business! This matter of life and death?"

"Bless my life," shouted the Mayor, "this *is* it! This *is* a matter of life and death. If I don't get this cannon to work how can I beat the Town Clerk to-night? We're having a battle. He's bringing all his soldiers and I've got mine. This is the best thing in my artillery collection. Without it I shall lose, and he's already beaten me six times. Can't let him do that again."

The Mayor stopped suddenly, and blinked.

"Why, bless by soul, where's the man gone? Good gracious, he's disappeared! Right before my very eyes!"

The Mayor stood baffled as Sammy retraced his steps round the desk. The valet had indeed disappeared. The strain had been too much for him. He had fainted.

MAKING A FILM

Several of our churches by now have enthusiastic groups of amateur cine-producers. At Wythenshawe last Christmas tremendous activity went into the production of a Nativity Film in colour under the vigorous direction of Mr. J. Westaway. The aim was to give the Sunday School members, adult and junior, a focus of active co-operation over several weeks, and to produce a film which would be a miniature work of art and inspiration.

And what activity was involved! The producer, who lives in Sale, a few miles from the church, had to bring all the equipment by car, and it included a formidable battery of high-wattage lamps. These had to be assembled before and dismantled after each rehearsal for "shooting" film. All the photography was done in the evening, and after the first attempt, the lighting was declared to be unsatisfactory, and more lights were procured, and were differently mounted. As the film used was 8mm. the players had to be close to the lights and most of the shots had to be at close range.

The main difficulty was to get the children to be sufficiently active under the camera. Shots were quite brief, but mouths had to be open in conversation and song. Armfuls of long grass were brought in from the church grounds to aid the scenic effects of the Shepherds round their fire, and the mountain path along which Shepherds and Wise Men journeyed to Bethlehem. Tables, cloths and timber stumps were ingeniously used in different ways to provide settings and a simple doorway made out of painted cardboard sections provided the background for the inn in which there was no room.

The film itself was shown at the close of the Carol service on December 23rd and was described by its designer as "A humble beginning." Background music was cleverly synchronised through tape recordings made with the Altrincham Choir and organist. Setbacks were many. One night at Wythenshawe the main fuse was blown during a rehearsal, but the electricians soon had it in hand, and shooting proceeded. After a successful recording at Altrincham, the tape was taken home only to reveal super-imposed noises which had developed on the tape since it was first played back! But Mr. Westaway has shown that the cine-screen can play its part, even in the hands of amateurs, in expressing reverence, wonder and beauty in a Christmas service.

NEWS AND VIEWS

THE CHURCHES

HINCKLEY. Members of the Sunday School took round Christmas parcels on Christmas Eve to sick and aged members of the Great Meeting.

LEEDS. £50 has been sent from MILL HILL Chapel to the Essex Hall appeal fund. The newly formed Y.P.L. has so far had a varied and successful programme with a visit from the Yorkshire regional secretary, another from the Rev. Eric Philips who spoke about the Holiday Homes at Great Hucklow, a branch visit to the G.P.O. and to a pantomime. Members have also taken part in the Dramatic Society's pantomime "Aladdin."

MACCLESFIELD. The target of £100 at the Sale of Work was exceeded by £30.

MANCHESTER. The District Sunday School is reviving the Spring Festival of Arts and Crafts which has not been held for some years owing to inability to find an organising secretary. Several prize-givings at Sunday Schools are reported. There was a good attendance at the WYTHENSHAWE prize - distribution, carried out by Mrs. Wilson, of Altrincham, who was once a teacher in the first Day School to be started in Wythenshawe. She related some of her experiences there. BLACKLEY and MIDDLETON congregations are planning a joint service for the Spring. CHORLTON's report for 1956 announces: "Our attendances soared to an approximate average of over 150. Our Sunday School more than trebled. All other organisations grew in proportion, and two new organisations started during the year—the Choir and the Y.P.L." HALE CHAPEL Women's League are working industriously for their soft furnishings fund with coffee mornings and bring-and-buy sales. In the Altrincham area ministerial interchanges between Unitarians and Methodists are not countenanced because of the stipulations of Methodist trust deeds, but for the last two annual Free Church exchange Sundays, interchanges have been arranged between the Unitarian chapels in Altrincham and Hale and the Salvation Army, and a real measure of unity was experienced on both sides.

STAND Chapel Y.P.L. began the year by providing tea and biscuits after evening service at a charge of 3d. each, and they have also held a "Snow Ball" in aid of the Essex Hall fund. The Sunday School has arranged a Fancy Dress Party. The Music Club's programme after evening service on January 27th was a "Teen-Age Programme."

U.Y.P.L. Four new branches have now been affiliated: Flowery Field, Gorton, Pudsey and Wythenshawe.

THE INQUIRER
The weekly organ of the Unitarian and Free Christian Churches
Every Saturday, Price 3d.
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THE LINDSEY PRESS
Religion in a Changing World: Unitarians State Their Faith
Nineteen numbers have been issued to date. The last three titles are as follows:
"The Gospels To-day," by L. A. Garrard, B.D., M.A.
"Freedom, Authority and Liberal Christianity," by F. Kenworthy, M.A., B.D.
"Can We Prove the Truth of Religion?" by Raymond V. Holt, B.Litt., M.A.
1/6 each, by post 1/8. Send for catalogue containing complete list in series.
The Lindsey Press, 15, Gordon Square, London, W.C.1.

NEWS FROM HUNGARY

We are glad to know that there were no casualties in the families of the ministers of the Unitarian Church in Budapest. Personal greetings have been sent to the Editor in a brief letter signed by the Unitarian ministers.

Mansfield congregation, which has maintained links with Budapest for some years, sent off a parcel which arrived in Budapest before Christmas. More parcels would be welcome, and the present need is more for foodstuffs than for clothing. Coffee, tea, cocoa and milk powder are welcome. Goods are admitted free of duty.

NOTICE

Charity of Timothy Dean

(Founded by Will dated March, 1726, for Poor Ministers and Poor Widows of Ministers)

Applications are invited from eligible persons residing in the Counties of Chester (to which County preference must be given) and Lancaster.

Forms of Application to be returned by April 25th, may be obtained from Rev. F. Cottier, 42, Windmill Lane, Reddish, Stockport, Secretary of the Widows' Fund, the Committee of which now comprises the Trustees of the Charity.

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Northern Sunday School Federation

UNITARIAN HOLIDAY HOMES

Great Hucklow, Buxton, Derbyshire.

Telephone: Tideswell 218

The Florence Nightingale Memorial Home is open throughout the autumn and winter (except at Christmas) at the reduced charge of £4 6s. per week (15s. per day). Enjoy a restful autumn holiday with good food and companionship.

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